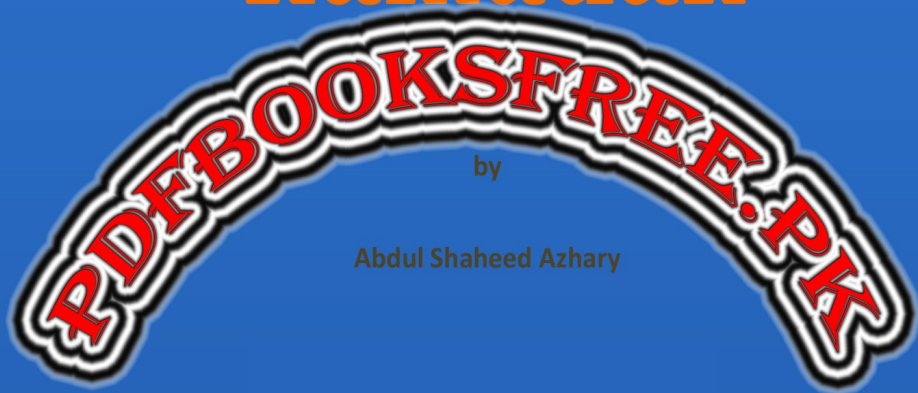


Islamic Books Series

Chances of attaining Taqwa in Ramadan

by

Abdul Shaheed Azhary



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Chances of Attaining Taqwa in Ramadan

"O you who believe! fasting is prescribed for you, as it was prescribed upon those before you in order that you may attain taqwa." ¹

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ (البقرة)

Taqwa is one of the most precious thing a believer can attain, but it is not easy. Allah awarded the believers the month of Ramadan as the training period to attain taqwa. So He made the way to attain taqwa easy and simple. We see believers are hurry to do good works during Ramadan, why? because Allah has facilitated some important things to believers so that nothing can prevent them from doing good works.

[Surah al-Baqarah 2:183]. ¹

1. People connected to Quran in Ramadan

Ramadan is the month of Quran as well. It is connected each other. Ramadan does the job of training the self-control while Quran helps educating the trainee. One's thirsty to become perfect in worship is impossible without training self-control and education, thus reading and studying Quran is very important in Ramadan.

Prophet was more concerned with Quran in the month of Ramadan.

Hadith says

عن عبدالله بن عباس رضي الله عنهما قال : " كان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم أجود الناس ، وكان أجود ما يكون في رمضان حين يلقاه جبريل ، وكان يلقاه في كل ليلة من رمضان فيدارسه القرآن ، فلرسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم أجود بالخير من الريح المرسلة " (البخاري)

Ibn 'Abbas narrates, saying, "The Messenger of Allah was the most generous person, and he would be at his most generous in Ramadan because Jibril would come to him every night and he would study the Qur'an with him.

Truly, when Allah's Messenger would meet Gabriel, he would be more generous than a fleeting wind.”²

2. Ramadan is blessed with the revelation of Quran.

Allah says:

"شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنْزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنَاتٍ مِّنَ الْهُدَىٰ
وَالْفُرْقَانِ" (البقرة)

"The month of Ramadhan [is that] in which was revealed the Qur'an, a guidance for the people and clear proofs of guidance and criterion"³

The Righteous salaf (ancestors) were giving too much importance to Ramadan. Imam Zuhri says: Ramadan is reading Quran and feeding food

If Ramadan comes Sufyan Al Thouri turns in to reading Quran and leaves all other kinds of worships

Qatada would finish reading Quran in every three nights of Ramadan, when last ten of Ramadan arrives he used to read full-Quran in one night.

Bukhari²

Quran 2:185³

It is reported that Imam Shafi (r.a) would finish reading Quran every day, and in the month of Ramadan he would finish it two times a day.

الصيام والقرآن يشفعان للعبد يوم القيامة، يقول الصيام: أي رب منعته الطعام والشهوات فشفعني فيه، ويقول القرآن: رب منعته النوم بالليل فشفعني فيه، فيشفعان. (مسند أحمد)

Both fasting and Quran recommend on the day of Resurrection: the fast will say: Oh my lord, I prevented him from food and worldly desires; so accept my intercession!. Quran will say: Oh my lord! I prevented him from sleeping at night; so accept my intercession!. Allah will accept the intercession of the both. ⁴

3. Training school for self-control and changing bad habits.

One person is in fast and found a bottle of water laying on the ground while he is thirsty. He assured that nobody watching him. If he drinks a sip of water no one can identify it. But he simply abstain from it because he remembers Allah is watching him!

Reported by various hadith books for example see Musnd Ahmed 2/174 ⁴

Fasting is one of the best time to train oneself how to control himself. Prophet advised to observe the fast for those who are unable to marry, because fasting is capable to bringing balance between sexual desire and moral awareness. Prophet said : "O youths! Whoever amongst you is able to marry, then let him do so; for it restrains the eyes and protects the private parts. But whoever is unable, then let him fast, because it will be a shield for him."

Ibn 'Abdul-Barr (d.464H)- rahimahullah - said: "What is meant by the month of Patience is the month of Ramadhan ... So fasting is called patience because it restrains the soul from eating, drinking, conjugal relations and sexual desires."

By self-control, one can change his habits. It is best way to be free from the power of forcing bad intention in our minds. Many of us are captive of habits which are injurious to life, waste of money and they mark the bad effect on our family and friends. We simply 'satisfied' with these bad habits because we believed that they are inevitable and impossible to change. But Ramadan proved that those habits are adjustable. Ramadan points

out: you abstained from enjoying food, drink and sexual desires for a long period of time during the day of fasting, contrary to what you were used to do in other months; this proves that you can change any habit if you have will and strong determination.

4. Special worship in the night(taraweeh)

Special worship in the nights of Ramadan reminds us some important facts . Followings are few of them.

- Ancestors were called by the name ' قائم الليل صائم ' means the man who is fasting in the daytime and performing salah in the night. In fact it is one of the high grade a believer can obtain . Praying Isha' in the night probably not enough to be called by this name because ancestors were performing non- obligatory throughout the night. By performing taraweeh, every believer get chance to be entitled for this position.
- Taraweeh is reminder to return to Allah. After iftar one is relaxed and most probably he will fall in any trap of devil and thus dishonor the dignity of the

fast observed in the day. Praying taraweeh leaves no time to do such things, instead again one is forced to remember Allah.

- Taraweeh also gives exercise to body and soul.

5. Night of layaltul qadr not revealed

Ramadan has a night called 'laylatul Qadr' which is better than one thousand nights, but the exact date is not revealed. Believers are motivated to do good works as much as possible in whole Ramadan so that they can get the reward of that great day. Surely, it increases the amount of worship because whatever good deed one performs, Allah will not leave him unrewarded.

6. Dua is recommended in Ramadan

Believers are strongly inspired to supplicate Allah during Ramadan. Allah has made several offers in this sacred month and the answering the question is one of them. Just knock the door you will be answered!, because He is near to you! ; this is what Allah declared in Quran. Dua during Ramadan is categorized and made easy to do.

Abu hurairah narrated that the messenger (pbuh) said: "There are three whose supplication is not rejected: The just ruler; and the fasting person until he breaks his fast; and the supplication of the oppressed".

Abdullah bin Umar said: 'I heard Allah's messenger saying: "Indeed the fasting person has at the time of breaking fast, a supplication which is not rejected"' so he (Abdullah) used to gather his family and supplicate at the time of breaking fast

Some of Duas:

- Dua at taraweeh and tahajjud
- Dua at the time of breaking the fast.
- Dua after reading Quran\
- Special dua in laylatul qadr

Thirty days divided into three parts: 10 days of Rahma(mercy), 10 days of Magfirah(forgiveness), 10 days of itq(freeing from hellfire). Believers are requested to supplicate corresponding duas during each ten days.

A believer should not be disappointed if he feels his dua is not answered. Ubadah Ibn Al-Samit narrated that the prophet (pbuh) said: “Any Muslim who supplicates to Allah in a du'a which contains no sin or breaking of kinship, Allah will give him one of three things: either his Du'a will be immediately answered or, it will be saved for him in the hereafter, or it will turn away an equivalent amount of evil (from him)”. The companions said: 'so we will ask for more.' He (pbuh) replied: “Allah is more (generous)

7. I'tikaf

I'tikaf is a great worship specially recommended during Ramadan. It is staying in the mosque with the proper intention. Prophet (S.A) was observing too much I'tikaf during last ten nights of Ramadan. One can observe I'tikaf at any time, but during Ramadan it is most preferred. Rewards are great for those who observe it, and during Ramadan these rewards will be multiplied. As abstaining from food and lust helps create great state of piousness in inner minds of fasting person, retreating in mosque (observing I'tikaf) also gives an extensive experience in empowering worship morale.

8. Devils are locked up

Ramadan is the good opportunity to pave the way towards Jannah, because the devils are being locked up during the month. When the devils temptation is less, it is easy to pray, fast and read Quran.

The Propeht(S.A.S) said, “When Ramadan begins, the gates of the heavens are opened, and the gates of the Hell-fire are closed, and the Shayatin (devils) are chained.”

The doubt arises, why still we see sins and evils in Ramadan? Imam Ibn Hajar clears this doubt: “And it is possible that what is intended is that the devils are not as determined to tempt the Muslims as they are able to outside of it (i.e.Ramaḍān), because of them (the Muslims) being busy with fasting, which suppresses the desires, recitation of the Qur’ān, and the remembrance [of Allāh]. And others have said: ‘What is intended by Shayātīn here are some of them, and they are the evil ones from amongst them...’”

"....and it is possible that the opening of the gates of Paradise means what Allāh has facilitated for His

worshippers from the acts of obedience, and these are the reasons for entering Paradise; and the closing of the gates of the Hell-fire means a diversion from the desire to commit *sins*, which leads the sinner to the Hell-fire, and the chaining of the devils means the weakening of their ability to tempt and beautify desires.’”

9. More hope in Allah's reward and wide range of Rahma :

Whoever draws nearer (to Allah) by performing any of the (optional / nafl / sunnah) good deeds in this month(Ramadan) shall receive the same reward as performing an obligatory deed at any other time, and whoever discharges an obligatory deed in this month(Ramadan) shall receive the reward of performing seventy obligations at any other time... ”

The Prophet (S.A.S) said:

"Whosoever reaches the month of Ramadhan and does not have his sins forgiven, and so enters the Fire, then may Allah distance him"

فَقَالَ : يَا مُحَمَّدُ ، مَنْ أَدْرَكَ رَمَضَانَ فَلَمْ يُغْفَرْ لَهُ ، فَأَبْعَدَهُ اللَّهُ ، قُلْتُ : آمِينَ

10. The "few days" in Quran is a hint :

When Quran introduces Ramadan, it says fasting in Ramadan is Ayyam ma'doodat (أيام معدودات) which means they are only 'few days'. This is a clear indication to grab the days and nights of Ramadan as much as possible because this "few days" will leave soon. It is a call to hurry up and to be vigilant of every second he spends in Ramadan.

11. The fast is like a shield

Fast is the shield that protects the fasting person from falling into sins. The fast decreases the evil desires which lead to sin and then to hellfire. We can't see any worship described as shield or protector except fast, because fast plays both role of physical and spiritual protector. While major worships of Islam such as Five times prayer, haj, reading quran, giving zakat and charity are protecting the believer from the hellfire of hereafter, the fast- in addition to protecting from hellfire- shows practical way to distance oneself from falling into evil.

12. Worshippers cannot be perfect

People are worshipping more in Ramadan. Praying five times prayer in their due time, giving in charity and so on. There are chances that one can think that he has done so much in Ramadan in no need to do more worships in rest of the year. By making Zakat obligatory immediately after Ramadan, Allah gave the clear message to believers: even if you have done all good deeds in Ramadan, you are not allowed to distance yourself from good in other months; rather you should be very active. Zakatul fitr says: even after Ramadan, one has to strive hard and zakatul fitr is the beginning of it.

13. Mercy of Prophet:

Although Islam encourages worship and devoutness, prophet (S.A.S) wanted to soften the hardship and expressed his fear whenever he felt that his followers would be in difficulty. Prophet's mercy towards the believers is obvious in taraweeh. He didn't attend the taraweeh prayer at Madeena mosque on fourth day when he found the huge number of companions were gathered in mosque. Because he feared taraweeh would become obligatory(fard) if he lead the prayer in fourth day. No

doubt, out of his mercy towards his followers he abstained from attending it.

This proves the mercy of the prophet towards his followers.

14. Unity of Ummah

All Muslims have to fast if the month of Ramadan is established by the Qadi (judge). He announces the beginning of Ramadan according to available authentic resources. After Qadi's announcement one has no option but to obey his ruling. Thus Islam inspired the message of unity of Ummah through Ramadan.

Other factors which unite Muslims in Ramadan are congregational Taraweeh prayer and collective Iftar(breakfasting) parties.

15. Illegal unity is discouraged

Although Islam encouraged to unite and asked believers to unanimously obey ruling of Qadi(judge) in this regard, it also called to accept the indifference in some cases. The judge (Qadi) may refuse to testify the month of Ramadan if the moon is sighted far away from certain

distance. While Ramadan is announced to the people of moon sighted areas by their judge, another Qadi who is far away from that area could refrain from following them. This is not regarded as the fracture in the unity of Ummah, rather it is a lesson to be lenient and cooperative.

16. Poors welfare

Allah set Zakat al-Fitr as purification of wealth and as a help and sustenance to the poor. The purpose is to prevent the poor from asking on the day of eid festival. Zakat is the right of the poor and not a magnanimity of the rich.

17. Month of activity

Muslims are expected to involve in social and other humanitarian activities in Ramadan more than any other months. Prophet (S.A) and his companions didn't look like tired and weary in Ramadan. Rather, Ramadan was the inspiration to do more. Great war Badr occurred in Ramadan, most successful conquering of Makah(Fat'h

Makah) held in Ramadan and so many other important incidents as well occurred in this holy month.

18. Good manners:

The fast encourages to abstain from bad manners.

Prophet(S.A) says:

"Fasting is not merely abstaining from eating and drinking. Rather, it is also abstaining from ignorant and indecent speech. So if anyone abuses or behaves ignorantly with you, then say: I am fasting, I am fasting."

"Whoever does not abandon falsehood in speech and action, then Allah has no need that he should leave his food and drink" .

"It may be that a fasting person receives nothing from his fast, except hunger and thirst."

If you find any mistake in this writing please send your correction to imanguide@gmail.com

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